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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/871,970	06/04/2001	Auvo K. Kettunen	10-1348	5437

23117 7590 09/09/2003

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EXAMINER

ALVO, MARC S

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1731

DATE MAILED: 09/09/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/871,970

Applicant(s)

KETTUNEN ET AL

Examiner

Steve Alvo

Art Unit

1731

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 June 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 17-23 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 17-23 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 317163
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

Claims 13-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over PROUGH.

PROUGH discloses (Figures 1 and 2), a comminuted fibrous treatment system (apparatus), comprising a digester (11), a first horizontal steaming vessel (15); a conduit connecting the first vessel (15) with second vessel (16), a slurry pump (22) for pumping the slurry from the second vessel (16) to the digester. Obviously the steaming vessel is under the corresponding steam pressure. The vessel (16) has a diameter greater than the conduit. See also Figures 3, 4, 6, 7 and 9 for variations of the chip charging means including feed metering devices. It would have been obvious to the artisan that the first vessel is a pressure vessel. See Figure 11 for having circular upper section and cone frustum lower section.

Applicant's arguments have been considered but are not convincing as Figures 3 and 4 of PROUGH compare the Prior Art to the process of PROUGH. Comparing the 2 Figures PROUGH replaces vessels 12 and 15 with single vessel 41 and teaches placing the chip meter (14) and pressure isolation low pressure feeder (14') with a single vessel connected to conduit (16) with chip meter (feeder 43) and pressure isolation low pressure feeder (14'). It would have been obvious to use vessel 41 as both a chip bin and steaming vessel as vessel 41 of Figure 4 replaces the chip bin (12) and steaming vessel (15). It would have been obvious to place the chip meter (14) and pressure isolation low pressure feeder (14') of Figure 3 between the first vessel (15 or 41) and the conduit.

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

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A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

When filing an **“Official”** FAX in Group 1730, please indicate in the Header (upper right) **“Official”** for papers that are to be entered into the file. The **“Official”** FAX phone numbers for this TC 1700 are:

Non-Final Fax: (703) 872-9310 After-Final FAX: (703) 872-9311.

When filing an **“Unofficial”** FAX in Group 1730, please indicate in the Header (upper right) **“Unofficial”** for Draft Documents and other Communications with the PTO that are not for entry into the file of the application. This will expedite processing of your papers. The **“Unofficial”** FAX phone number for this Art Unit (1731) is **(703) 305-7115**.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the **primary examiner** should be directed to **Steve Alvo** whose telephone number is **(703) 308-2048**. The Examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday from **6:00 AM - 2:30 PM (EST)**.

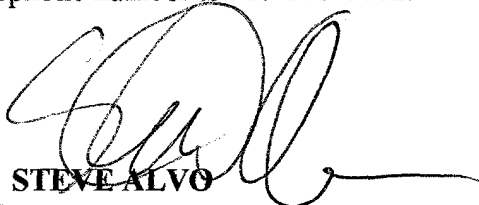
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mr. Steve Griffin, can be reached on 703-308-1164.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the **Group receptionist** whose telephone number is **703-308-0661**.

MSA
9/5/2003



STEVE ALVO
PRIMARY EXAMINER
ART UNIT 1731